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ABSTRACT

This book discusses the forces that create and perpetuate discrimination in special education and provides suggestions for eliminating discriminatory practices. Chapter 1, "The Problem," describes the enormous disparities between the school experiences and educational outcomes of poor, non-European American, immigrant, refugee, rural, and limited English proficient students with disabilities and their European American middle and upper class peers. Chapter 2, "Prejudice and Discrimination," provides examples of ways that teachers and schools discriminate against students from minority backgrounds. Chapter 3, "Culturally, Contextually and Linguistically Inappropriate Special Education Services," describes how the educational system has been developed to serve the needs of the upper-class and middle-class European Americans. The needs of children from different backgrounds and the failure of special education programs to meet these needs are discussed. Chapter 4, "Obstacles to Change and Solutions" identifies five main reasons why many special educators resist learning about students' cultural, contextual, and linguistic characteristics, including the lack of diversity among special educators, prejudicial attitudes, reluctance to rock the boat, unwillingness to expend the energy, and lack of preparedness. The final chapter, "Concluding Comments," urges special educators to work to eliminate inequalities in special education. (Each chapter includes references.) (CR)

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